

VZCZCXRO7846  
RR RUEHAST RUEHHM RUEHLN RUEHMA RUEHPB RUEHPOD RUEHTM RUEHTRO  
DE RUEHRL #0294 0711539  
ZNR UUUUU ZZH  
R 121539Z MAR 09  
FM AMEMBASSY BERLIN  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 3551  
INFO RUEHZN/ENVIRONMENT SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY COLLECTIVE  
RUEHRC/USDA FAS WASHINGTON DC  
RUEAUSA/DEPT OF HHS WASHINGTON DC  
RUEHPH/CDC ATLANTA GA  
RUEHRC/DEPT OF AGRICULTURE WASHINGTON DC  
RUEHMH/AMCONSUL MUNICH 2010

UNCLAS BERLIN 000294

SENSITIVE  
SIPDIS

PASS TO DEPT FOR AIAG, OES/STC, OES/IHA, MED, OGAC AND EAP/EP,  
EAP/MLS, EAP/J, INR  
HHS PASS TO CDC  
HHS FOR OGHA

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [AMED](#) [EAGR](#) [TBIO](#) [KFLU](#) [PREL](#) [ECON](#) [CASC](#) [GM](#)  
SUBJECT: Bavarian Avian Influenza Incident Report

¶1. (U) Summary: A duck shot on January 10, 2009 in Bavaria was confirmed on March 10 as a carrier of highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) H5N1 virus. The bird was tested as part of a routine wild bird surveillance program. Germany considers the event an isolated incident, and there are no indications that the virus is spreading among wild bird populations or the German domestic poultry stock. End Summary.

¶2. (U) The mallard duck was among 35 killed during a hunt near Lake Starnberg, in the German state of Bavaria, about 30km (18mi) from Munich. Four Canadian geese were also killed in the hunt, and during subsequent routine screening of the carcasses, none of the 39 birds showed outward indications or symptoms of infection. As part of an EU-wide wild bird monitoring program, swab samples from all 39 birds were submitted to the Bavarian State Office for Health and Food Security, which found that one of the ducks was a carrier of HPAI H5N1. The positive finding was confirmed March 10 by the Friedrich-Loeffler-Institute (FLI), Germany's Federal Research Institute for Animal Health.

¶3. (U) Experts from the Starnberg administrative district, the Upper Bavaria regional administration, the Bavarian State Office for Health and Food Security, the Bavarian State Office for Environment and Health, and the German Federal Ministry of Food, Agriculture, and Consumer Protection indicated, through a combined statement by the Starnberg district office, that the positive finding was not surprising because wild birds are "natural reservoirs for influenza viruses".

¶4. (U) The FLI's most recent risk assessment, from February 23, characterizes the risk for introduction and spread of HPAI H5N1 to poultry stocks from the wild bird population as "low". Based on this assessment, the isolated nature of the finding, and the concurring professional evaluations from the relevant state and federal ministries that there are no indications of the virus' introduction to the poultry stock, German authorities have decided not to set up additional monitoring areas or quarantine zones. The EU Commission has issued a statement supporting this decision.

¶5. (U) The Starnberg district office categorized the event as a single, random finding and noted that this is the only bird, of the 468 from the district that have been tested since Germany's first outbreak in 2006, to ever test positive. In reinforcing its characterization of the event as isolated, the office also pointed out that 20 birds shot in the same area the following day all tested negative for the virus.

¶6. (U) Embassy Berlin and Consulate General Munich

coordinated on this cable.

KOENIG